Our planet needs a little TLC

The Leader-Post (Regina, Saskatchewan)

March 14, 2005 Monday

Final Edition

Copyright 2005 CanWest Interactive, a division of CanWest Global Communications Corp. All Rights Reserved

Section: MINUS 20; Pg. B8

Length: 784 words

Byline: Cassidy McFadzean, Special to The Leader-Post

Body

The Earth is sick. Pollution is poisoning the seas and skies. Over-consumption is raping the land of its natural resources. Greed is slaughtering the lives of the innocent in exchange for the ever-dominant dollar. Power is taking away our rights, and brainwashing us into believing it's OK.

Ignorance is breeding the same racism and hate that has always existed. Selfishness is stealing the lives of the poor while the rich benefit. Poverty is creating hopelessness in the lives of those who need hope the most. The Earth is poisoned and no one seems to care.

Apathy is the newest fad and all the cool kids are doing it. The youth of today could care less about the environmental, social, and political issues that are greatly affecting our current world, and shaping the Earth of tomorrow. I can certainly understand why this frame of mind is so popular.

The coolest kids are obviously the ones with no remorse for their abrasive actions. The most attractive idols are obviously those with no sympathy or consideration for others. I can certainly see why many teens don't want to care about this sick and dying earth. Apathy doesn't only make you look like a cool, uncaring rebel; it also offers a sanctuary from the poisoned and dying world of today.

Some teenagers accept the fact that the Earth is indeed in dire straits, but feel completely helpless to do anything about it. This feeling of hopelessness may be the cause of such destructive behaviour that is only too common these days. When you've been told over and over again that your future is already lost, destroying yourself and everything around you can be easily justified. As a result of such disheartened conclusions battered into our minds by adults and the media, society has welcomed a new generation of stoned teenagers escaping life by numbing themselves with drugs or taking other destructive measures. It seems a startling amount of young people would rather get high than face the cruel reality of everyday life.

On the other side of the spectrum, another group of teenagers are not completely uncaring, but would rather spend their time contemplating the real important issues in life such as shopping, movies and the latest trends. These self-absorbed young people close their eyes to such uncomfortable issues as animal cruelty or war. When songs with unpleasant intelligent lyrics play on the radio, the ignorant teenager of today will change the station, opting for a happier tune. Being uninformed is an alternative these teenagers choose instead of being bored by world issues they could care less about.

Our planet needs a little TLC

Apathy must be great. How wonderful it must be to be completely uncaring of the world around you. To be so destructive of the world around you, you must feel constantly invincibile and no need to ever care about the consequences of your actions. To be so self-absorbed must be like a never-ending holiday of never having to worry about anyone else but yourself. One would think apathy would be the best feeling in the world.

However, the problem with apathy is that even though you may be too high or oblivious to care about the issues of the world, it doesn't actually make them go away. Poisoning yourself with drugs will still destroy your brain cells. Being ignorant to others will still cause them to have hurt feelings, whether you care or not. Every action the apathetic youth takes affects the world in frightening and almost unimaginable ways.

It is only a matter of time before apathy strikes back. Because after decades of not caring, we will soon be forced to care -- whether we want to or not. It is becoming a matter of life and death and in a matter of years it will be up to the youth of today to deal with the mistakes of yesterday.

The rainforest is being destroyed.

Animals suffer the cruel unnecessary abuse we subject them to. Climate change is becoming a frightening reality. Thousands of children are starving to death in Third World countries. In North America, the rich are getting richer while the poor are becoming poorer. These real issues are only a few of the many affecting us daily.

Apathy is a fad that needs to be extinguished immediately. It is time to start caring about this earth because hopeless and unimportant as it may seem at times, it is the only planet we get to live on.

The youth of today are the leaders of tomorrow, and hopeless as the issues may seem, and helpless as we may feel surrounded by them, we do have the power to change this world. We have the ability to create a healthier, equal, and safer world. All we need to do is start caring a little.

- McFadzean is a member of Minus 20, a group of Saskatchewan young people under 20 whose views appear regularly in the Leader-Post.

Load-Date: March 14, 2005

End of Document